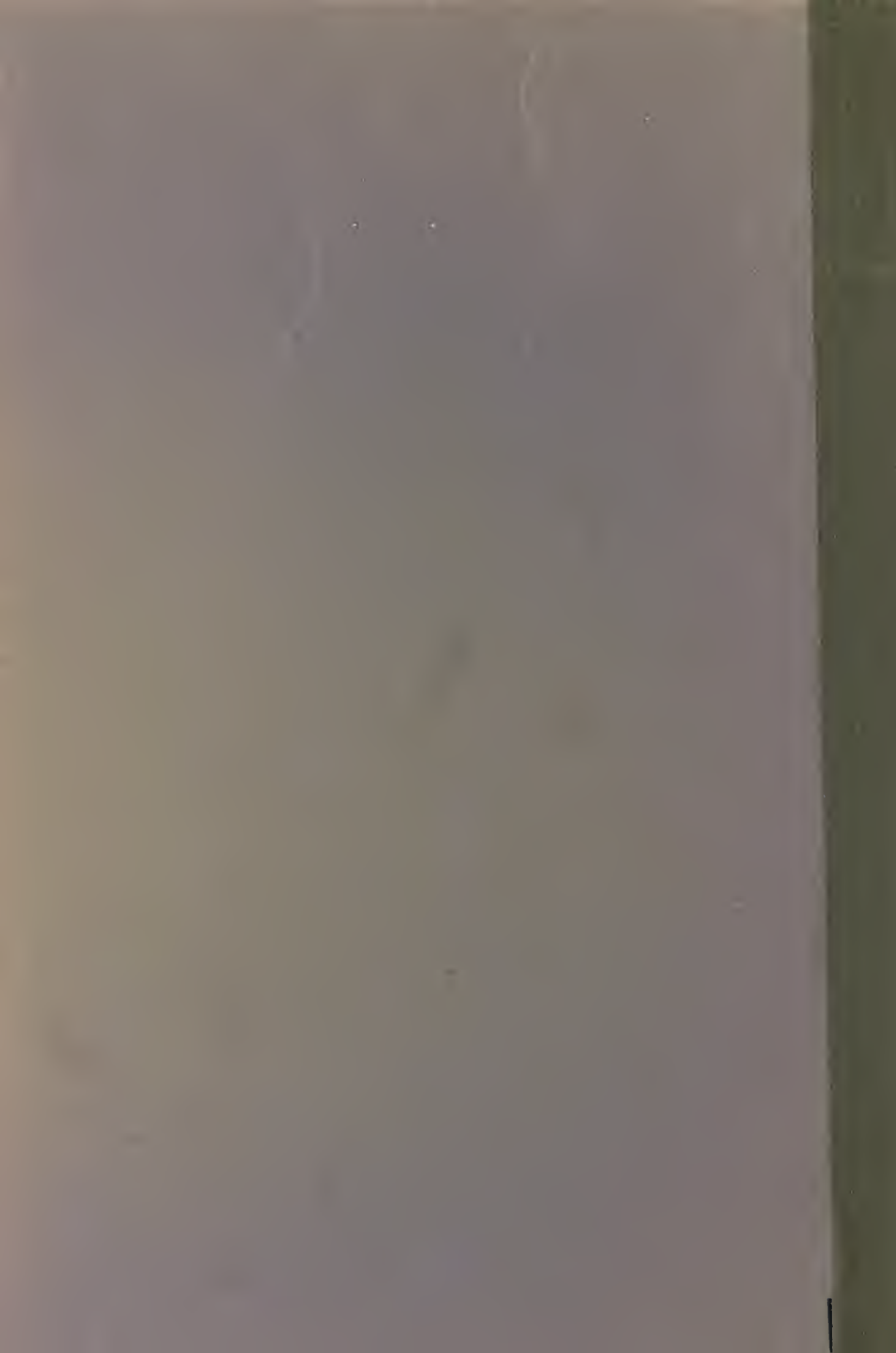


Flandrau, Grace C
(Hodgson)

Historic northwest
adventure land

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Historic Northwest Adventure Land



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Graduate of the University of Toronto,
and eminent Canadian geologist,
explorer, and scholar

Historic Northwest Adventure Land

By
GRACE FLANDRAU

Compliments of the
Great Northern Railway



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The Bird Woman

Erected by the Women of the United States in Memory of Sacajawea, the only woman in the Lewis and Clark Expedition and in Honor of the Pioneer Mother of Old Oregon.



Bronze in Marquette Bldg., Chicago

TO FOLLOW THOSE WATERS * * * WHICH WILL
HENCEFORTH LEAD US INTO STRANGE LANDS

HISTORIC NORTHWEST ADVENTURE LAND

Look at the map; westward to the Pacific from Chicago stretch the lines of the Great Northern railway system through the newest country in the world; through new, miraculous cities, new fields, farms and through forests only beginning to fall before the steady westward march of destiny. But the way it takes across the continent is old, and the traveller along this route journeys into a past rich with memories of adventure and heroic achievements.

Columbus, looking for a new trade route to India, stumbled upon a continent; and for many years it remained only an obstacle—something to be got around or through or over to the rich markets of the Orient.

As the centuries passed men gradually found the way across this continent which so inconveniently blocked the ocean highway. Trade routes to India were many and finally they were paved with steel. They had peopled a wilderness, created a commerce and a nation, and the distant goal was obscured by nearer and more vital issues.

The long smooth paths that stretch across the continent are haunted with shadow shapes, inheritance of the centuries when

through uncharted wilds and among savage peoples, the quest was carried.

Of these historic highways the one which in earliest times was the most travelled, is now followed by the Great Northern Railway; the name of its transcontinental train, the Oriental Limited, commemorates the ancient purpose which brought about the discovery of America and much of its early exploration; many of its stations—Chicago, Duluth, Allouez, Sioux City, Verendrye, Fort Union, Meriwether, Kalispell, Spokane, Wishram, Astoria, Seattle, Vancouver and others recall important phases of the past.

The French

The whole of the system, as far west as the Rocky Mountains, runs through what was once French territory, and no one can say how narrowly the people of the middle and northwest of the United States missed being citizens today of France.

Twelve years before the Puritans felled a tree or murmured a psalm on their famous rock-bound coast, Champlain, a gentleman and soldier of France, laid the foundation of Quebec and the French Empire in America. He founded as it were an institute of exploration. The pupils were young Frenchmen, their class rooms Indian villages, their study the languages and woodcraft of the savages and such knowledge of the country as the latter possessed. These became the famous voyageurs and coureurs de bois, first white men to appear in the Northwest.



Following the "Father of Waters"

Before the English colonists had gone far enough inland to lose the tang of the sea, the bark canoes of the French slid along the forest-walled streams of Wisconsin and Minnesota and floated on the broad waters of the Mississippi. Led by the passion for discovery, which at all times possessed the French and by the more concrete lure of the fur trade which beckoned with such desperate risks and high rewards, they entered a world which since time began no white man had ever seen.

Scarcely a step behind them followed men in the gray hooded cassocks and sandals of the Franciscan order, or the black robes of the Jesuits. As early as 1665 the most remote mission of that time was built by Father Allouez near the western end of Lake Superior. The important Great Northern terminal, Allouez, is now situated in the vicinity of that lonely station.

Besides voyageur, missionary priest and soft-footed forest runner came French officers commissioned to take possession of the wilderness in the name of France.

The Jesuit missionary, Marquette, and his companion, Joliet, were the first white men to reach the present site of the city of Chicago in 1673.

For more than half of its splendid scenic journey from Chicago to St. Paul, the route of the Oriental Limited follows the Mississippi. Just before reaching Prairie du Chien it crosses the Wisconsin river, most travelled of the waterways by which these first explorers descended from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi valley. Fourteen years after the Puritans landed at Plymouth,



*Oriental Limited Crossing Historic Stone Arch Bridge Just Below
St. Anthony Falls, Discovered by Father Hennepin in 1680*

Jean Nicollet, one of Champlain's woodland runners and the discoverer of Wisconsin, appeared on the waters of this river.

Prairie du Chien was from earliest times an important fur trading center, and French, British and American military posts succeeded each other at this place.

Where the Mississippi broadens to beautiful Lake Pepin, a semi-military post existed a hundred years before the American Revolution. It stood near the present city of Stockholm, Wisconsin. At Prescott the Oriental Limited crosses the St. Croix, another of the important avenues of early travel from the north.

Two French fur traders, Radisson and Groseillers, appeared in what is now the State of Minnesota between the years 1654-60. They encountered the Sioux near the present town of Mora on the Great Northern Railway, first of all recorded white men to visit this stone age people.

Where the Great Northern Railway crosses the Mississippi by the stone arch bridge in Minneapolis, Father Hennepin came upon the Falls of St. Anthony, and has enjoyed two centuries of fame as their discoverer; he was—but his achievement was quite involuntary as he was conveyed to the Mississippi—a most unwilling prisoner of the Sioux.

Fortunately Du Lhut, a French official and fur trader, happened down the St. Croix with a party of Frenchmen in time to rescue the Recollet friar, so that he might return to civilization and write a highly entertaining account—mostly of things he did not do.

DISCOVERY OF NORTH DAKOTA



*Verendrye Discovering the Upper
Missouri River*

Out in that part of the rich wheat lands of North Dakota where the towns are small, because the fields are so big, near the south loop of the Mouse river, there is a station on the Great Northern Railway named Verendrye. Had you alighted there almost two hundred years ago—in the fall of 1738 if dates are important—you would have come somewhere in the vicinity upon an

Indian village. Here were neither the bark huts of the woods Indians, nor the graceful leather lodges of the plains tribes. The houses were low, rounded, dome-like affairs, built of mud laid thickly over a frame work of saplings. It was a Hidatsa or Minnetaree town, a people who, like the Mandans, occupied permanent villages and cultivated flourishing crops of corn, beans, sunflowers, squashes and other gourds.

If you had arrived on a certain day late in November, you would have seen the house tops crowded with women and children waiting in mingled excitement, curiosity and terror. From the north appeared a horde of savages—men, women, children and dogs, and in their midst marched a score or more of fabulous beings—white men—the first to appear in North Dakota. Their leader did not walk, he was carried triumphantly (and most unwillingly we read) on the shoulders of the half-worshipping barbarians.

This was Pierre Gaultier de la Varennes, Sieur de la Verendrye, one of the greatest of the great French explorers. He with his sons added Dakota, the Red River of the North, the Saskatchewan, the upper Missouri, much of the western plains country and the eastern spurs of the Rockies to the map of America.

Verendrye was a French gentleman and soldier, born in Three Rivers, that cradle of pioneers on the St. Lawrence. He dedicated his life, his four sons and his fortune to an attempt to enlarge the dominions of France in the New World and discover for her the overland passage to the western sea. His task was to penetrate the virgin forest stretching westward from Lake Superior, establish bases of supplies, spend winter after bitter winter in rough log forts hastily thrown up on unknown waterways in the uttermost depths of the frozen wilderness; in summer to resume his westward quest; push on through trackless wastes toward an almost mythical goal; placate and trade with savage people. He must, of course, have a considerable party, and to support this vast undertaking he was accorded



*Interior of Mandan Hut by
Bodmer in 1833*

only the good wishes of the Crown, and a monopoly of trade in the forbidding Eden! So that added to the difficulties attendant on any expedition in a primitive country, his must support itself, must pause at each milestone to gather enough muskrat and beaver skins to satisfy the merchants in far off Montreal who had backed the enterprise, and had furnished it with supplies. Or who, when influenced by Verendrye's tireless enemies, quite as often failed to furnish them, leaving those who waited so perilously in their remote outposts, without the very necessities of life.

Verendrye's achievement, in spite of every difficulty and discouragement, forms one of the ringing chapters in our history.

The English

At Verendrye, alongside the right of way of the Great Northern, a monument commemorates another important personage and event in the history of this region.

In 1763 France lost all of her North American empire. Three kings in Europe had been squabbling over the balance of power, and this great misfortune to France was the result. That part of Louisiana lying east of the Mississippi, she was forced to yield to England by treaty; the western part she ceded to Spain the year before, that it might not fall into the hands of her hereditary enemy.

British traders from Montreal succeeded the French in the fur trading posts built by Verendrye and those who came after



Monument to David Thompson, Distinguished English Geographer and Explorer, at Verendrye, N. D.

him. These British merchants formed the Northwest Company which was to rival and at one time all but ruin, the royal monopolists of Hudson's Bay; although eventually it was absorbed by the latter company.

North of the international boundary these organizations carried their trade to the foot of the Rockies and one of their number, Alexander McKenzie, made in 1793 the first overland journey to the Pacific Coast. South of the border they established posts in the present states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, and regularly visited the Indian villages on the Mouse and upper Missouri rivers in Dakota discovered by Verendrye. There was need now of maps, not to guide land hungry men whose presence would destroy the fur business, but for the private use of the companies. Several important surveyors and map makers appeared at this time. Among them was David Thompson, whose character and supreme achievement place him in the front rank of the great men of action who subdued the West.

Thompson was a Welshman born in London, pupil of a charity school. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to the Hudson's Bay Company and embarked on a sailing vessel bound for the Northern coast of a half savage continent. The journey itself seems bad enough to us now; a tiny ship laboring for months across the stormy Atlantic, devoid of every comfort and all but the barest necessities; with bad food, bad water, crowded quarters, rough seas and rough companionship; and at the end only a lonely log trading post on the Arctic shores of Hudson's Bay.

Thompson was a red-checked, sturdy, homely little boy with black bangs and bright black eyes, brave, earnest, hard working, honest and intelligent, and he grew up to be just that kind of man. He had a natural bent for astronomy and the science of geography and all one winter at a Hudson's Bay post in the interior, he studied these subjects with the company surveyor. In 1797 he left this company and became associated with the Northwesters. During his service with both organizations he explored, surveyed and resurveyed and carefully mapped most of the immense territory occupied by them, including the north part of Minnesota and the trade route through North Dakota to the upper Missouri.

In 1797 he crossed the main line of the Great Northern railway near the present town of Verendrye en route to the Indian villages on the Mouse river and the upper Missouri.



*Following the Kootenai
Bridge at Albany Falls*

Along the Columbia

*The Pend d'Orielle River
Canyon of the Kootenai*

West of the Rockies the Oriental Limited again picks up his trail on the Kootenai river and follows it for more miles than that of any other explorers except Lewis and Clark.

The Great Northern is a river road and of all the water ways it follows—the Mississippi, the Red River of the North, the Mouse, the Missouri, the lovely Flathead, the Pend d'Orielle, the Columbia, to name but some of them—none is more beautiful, more haunted with shadows of the past than the peacock blue Kootenai.

Whether you see it in winter, when each dark branch of the pine trees droops under its white burden of snow, or in spring, when the willows are lace-like with tender green, or in autumn, when the little poplar seedlings growing among the crimson ground vines, are covered with leaflets of pure gold, and the quiet mountains wrapped in filmy scarves of cloud move slowly behind the flying train to form a changing, purple barricade about the river, the beauty of the Kootenai becomes a moving and unforgettable possession.

The very word Kootenai recalls a gracious memory, for the tribe who lived along its shores and gave it their name, were the noblest and most honorable of the primitive Americans. It is said that the Hudson's Bay traders, when obliged to be absent from their post among the Kootenais, left the stores unlocked and unguarded. The Indians brought their furs and took away the exact equivalent in goods. During forty years, writes the good missionary de Smet, the traders could not report the smallest object stolen.

The railway follows the river for a hundred miles through Kootenai canyon from Rexford to Bonners Ferry. At each of these points, as well as at Kootenai Falls, fur trading posts were established and maintained by Thompson, Finan McDonald and later traders. At the present town of Bonners Ferry a monument has been erected to commemorate this first route of travel and trade through what is now the state of Idaho.

At a more modern period gold miners bound for the mines of the Canadian Kootenai, swarmed along the river and steamboats ran between Jennings, Montana, forty miles below Rexford, and Fort Steele in Canada.

After leaving Kootenai river at Bonners Ferry, the Great Northern follows the shores of Pend d'Orielle Lake and river for some distance. Thompson and his men established trading posts on Pend d'Orielle Lake, on Clark's Fork, some sixty miles south-

eastward, for trade with the Flatheads and one called Spokane House on the Spokane river about eight miles northwest of the present city of Spokane.

In 1811 Thompson descended by canoe the entire Columbia river, from its source in the Rockies to its mouth at the Pacific, hoping to secure all that country to Great Britain. Why he did not do so, we shall presently see. His was the first exploration of the entire length of the Columbia. Painstakingly as he went, he surveyed and re-surveyed and, because of his observations of the heavens, the Indians gave him the poetic name "Man Who Looks at the Stars."

Like all those other early travelers, he made these journeys by canoe, on foot, or on horseback, with a handful of French or half-breed voyageurs, among tribes of Indians becoming increasingly hostile to white men; in summer heat and winter blizzards; along tumultuous waterways beset with rapids and whirlpools; through mountain gorges choked with fallen timber, roots, tangled underbrush and broken rocks, where no path lay and no white men had ever been. For many years the great map he made was the only authority on the topography of much of this vast region, and its astonishing accuracy may be verified by comparison with official maps of today.

His material recompense was neglect and direst poverty; his true reward a belated but dawning fame as one of our greatest surveyors and explorers. The first monument to David Thompson in the United States was erected in July, 1925, at the town of Verendrye, by the Great Northern Railway Company and presented to the state of North Dakota. It marks the place where the route of Thompson on his trip to the Missouri in 1797 crosses the railway and also the earlier path of Verendrye.

I have said that Thompson reached the mouth of the Columbia but did not accomplish his purpose of securing the country to Great Britain. The reason was that he found an American establishment there. Let us go back a few years.

The Americans

West of the Rocky Mountains the traveler on the Oriental Limited enters what was once known as the Oregon country. It comprised what are now Washington, Oregon, Idaho and a part of Montana and British Columbia.

A century and a half after the California coast was well known this region remained a blank on early maps and existed only in legend—the fantastic kingdom of Quivira and Anian. On many a tossing fo'c'sle, during many an idle hour under the hot suns of Spanish America or in gray seaports of the old world, tales were told of this imaginary realm, of its fabulous cities, its King Tantarax—an interesting mixture of fashionable prelate and American aborigine, a benevolent old gentleman with a long beard and crucifix of solid gold.

It was a temperate land, where wild fruits, green grass, flowing water, wild game and all things pleasing to a sea-weary sailor abounded and that nothing be wanting, the Straits of Anian, real and only passage to India, were added to the mythical kingdom.

Gradually as the centuries passed, Spanish and English vessels crept northward up the coast, and, at last, ships flying the flag of the new American republic. Peltries of sea otter and beaver were the lure, to be bought from the Indians for a few trinkets and sold at immense profit in China. There were also, on the part of Spaniards and British, the desire for territorial expansion and for possession of the straits of Anian, by which they might sail eastward through the continent to the Atlantic.

There were rumors too of a great river, but both English and Spaniards sailed past its mouth and failed to recognize it, and it remained for an American to make the discovery.

GRAY AND THE COLUMBIA

Early in May, in the year 1792, the full-rigged ship *Columbia*,



From a painting by Fred S. Cozens

The "Columbia" in the Columbia River

nine months out from Boston on a fur trading venture into the Pacific, sailed slowly southward along the coast of Washington. The captain, Robert Gray, was searching for the mouth of this mysterious river of the West, which he thought he had seen on a former cruise, and which weather conditions at the time had not permitted him to examine.

But now came a day of sunshine, light breeze, and a clear horizon, and the white sails of the Columbia bore her directly shoreward toward a dangerous line of foaming breakers, which for centuries had warned vessels away from land. Sounding as she went, the American ship found a safe channel across the bar, and folded her white wings in the tide waters of the legendary river.

Native canoes swarmed out from shore; Indians crowded on board eager to trade, or, when she ascended the river to make further exploration, ran along shore following in amazement the strange craft whose like they had never seen.

Thus Captain Gray discovered the River of the West, which he called the Columbia. It became a favorite trading place for vessels of all nations, but for almost twenty years no settlement was made there. Farther north the English Captain Vancouver and his men sailed through the straits of Juan de Fuca into the splendid inland sea of Puget Sound.

LEWIS AND CLARK

With the new century, Spanish Louisiana became a part of the American Republic, and in 1804 an official expedition was



Sacajawea Guiding Lewis and Clark—painting by E. S. Paxson in Montana State Capitol, Helena

sent out to find its way across the vast, unexplored domain and over the Rockies the Pacific coast.

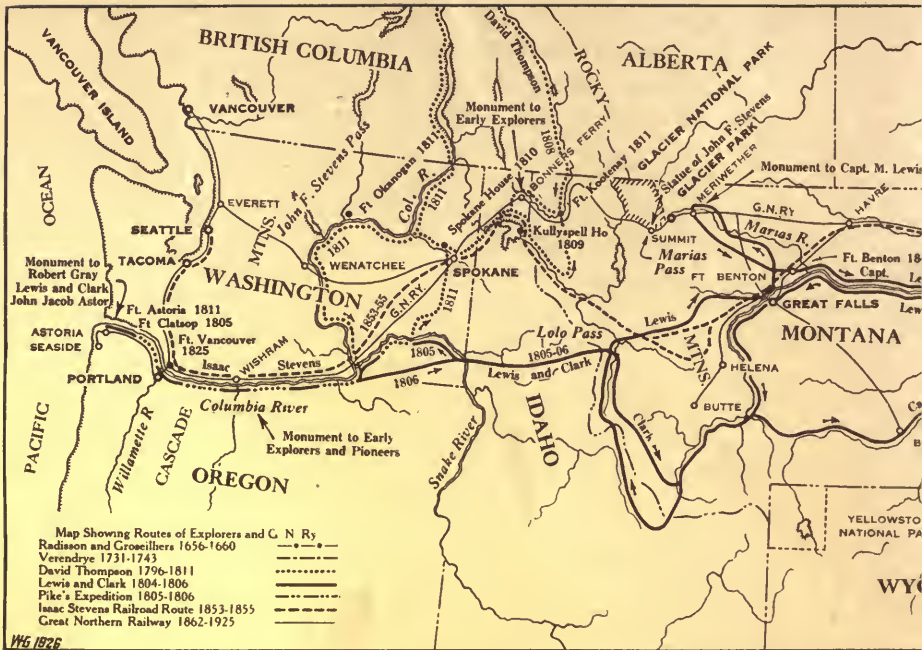
This party, under the leadership of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, set out from the Spanish-French village of St. Louis, ascended the Missouri for nearly 3,000 miles to one of its sources in the Rockies, crossed the mountains, and descended by the Snake and Columbia rivers to the sea. They left St. Louis in May, 1804, and returned in September, 1806—a journey we make in a few days.

The route of Lewis and Clark first touches the Great Northern Railway at Sioux City, Iowa. A monument has been erected at this place to Sergeant Floyd, the only member of the expedition to die during the journey. At Williston, North Dakota, the most northerly point reached by the Missouri, the railroad again strikes their trail and follows it for many hundreds of miles—south and southwest along the river to Great Falls and Helena and on to Butte in the vicinity of the way taken by them, making in a few hours the distance that took Lewis and Clark three months to traverse. West of Spokane the trail is picked up again when the Snake river is reached near Kahlottus, Washington, and followed to and down the Columbia by the route of the Oriental Limited.

Eliminate for a moment the intervening century. Along the brown Missouri, toiling upstream in their green cottonwood canoes built at Fort Mandan, we see the famous company—a handful of American soldiers, French boatmen and interpreters, an African negro, York, object of admiration and awe to wondering savages, a brave Indian girl, Sacajawea, carrying her baby on her back; and at their head those wise, courageous, true-hearted leaders, Lewis, President Jefferson's secretary and woodsman by birth and training, and Clark, who couldn't spell and did not know what it was to falter or be afraid.



*Monument to Captain Lewis at
Meriwether, Mont.*

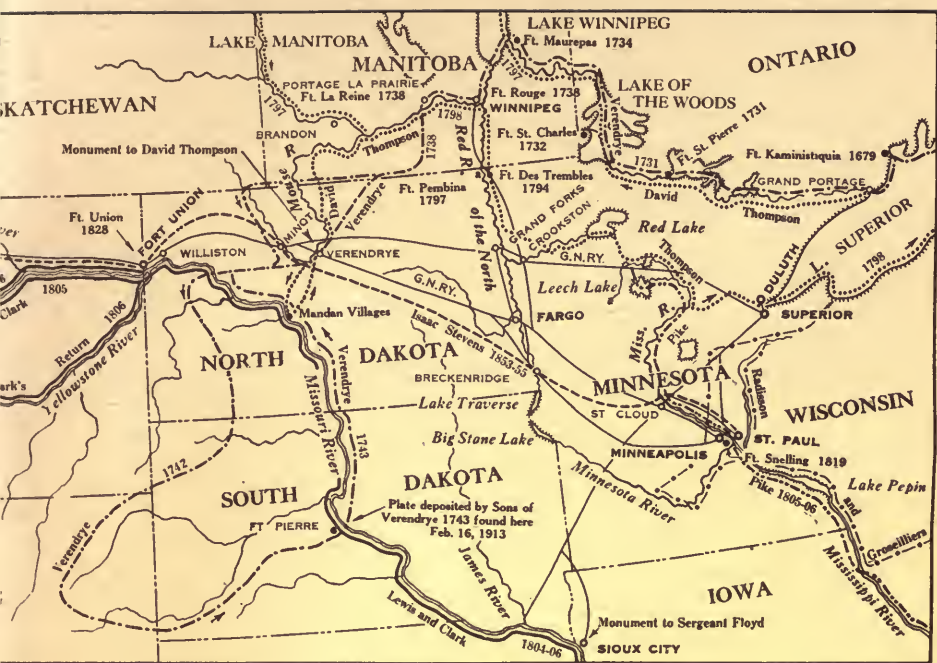


The Coming of the White Man.

Many were the adventures of this intrepid band. The ferocious grizzly bears that inhabited the banks of the upper Missouri caused them many exciting moments; in one instance that occurred not far from the mouth of the Milk river a large grizzly chased two of the hunters into the Missouri and caused four others to hide in the bushes before he was finally killed by a shot through the head. At another time a heavy rainstorm caught Captain

Clark, Sacajawea and her child and two others in a deep ravine. The downpour was so heavy that the ravine soon became a raging torrent and only the quick work of Clark saved the lives of the party.

The roar of locomotive drowns the song of the boatmen; the earth shakes as it thunders past lightly trailing its long scarf of steel, and vanishes over the unbroken rim of the horizon before the canoes have



advanced by more than their own length; an inconceivable, an impossible, phenomenon; a fantasy—had the veil of the future been torn for an instant from the eyes of those early wayfarers—to be laughed or shuddered at around the camp fire that glowed each night like a fallen star on the Montana plains.

The Indian girl, Sacajawea, who accompanied them along the upper Missouri, over the Rockies to the Pacific and back, and gave invaluable assistance to the party is best known to tradition as the Bird Woman; but tradition can add nothing to the romance of her amazing story.

Some years before Lewis and Clark arrived at the Mandan and Minnetaree villages on the upper Missouri, a war party of Minnetarees had made a successful horse stealing expedition to the Rocky Mountains.

Upward curling plumes of smoke and a band of grazing



*Captain Lewis Following the
Marias River*

horses, betrayed to them the existence of a Shoshone camp. At daybreak came the surprise attack, the war shouts and the carnage; and when it was over the Minnetaree raiders fled eastward across the plains with their wet scalps, stolen horses and Shoshone prisoners—among them Sacajawea.

A French vagabond voyageur and fur trader, Charboneau, who hung about the Missouri river villages, bought Sacajawea for wife and slave. Chiefly on her account he was engaged by Lewis and Clark as guide and interpreter for the expedition. In reality it was the Bird Woman who acted in both capacities. Faithful and courageous, she marched with the men, cheerfully shared the labor, endured without complaint the hardships of the great journey. At one time when one of their boats was upset in a sudden squall, due largely to the inexperienced handling of the frightened Charboneau, Sacajawea remained calm and saved the notes that Lewis and Clark had written just as they were about to float away. The early story of the Northwest enshrines many such Indian women, whose modest and self-effacing virtues have left a gracious and indelible memory.

In the hour of greatest need among the barren defiles of the Rockies, the expedition, by a coincidence which gives to Sacajawea's life a tang of fiction, came upon the very tribe from which she had been stolen and of which her brother was the chief, and obtained the indispensable horses and supplies.

On their return journey from the Columbia, the leaders separated, each to take a different route to the mouth of the Yellowstone.

Captain Lewis' was the more northerly course. It was his purpose to explore Marias river, a tributary of the Missouri which joins the main stream near Fort Benton some distance below the Great Falls. He wished to learn how far north it rose, and probably to ascertain whether its head waters did not provide a better pass through the mountains than those discovered farther south.

Marias river led the explorers deep into the dangerous country of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventres Indians. An encounter with a band of Gros Ventres proved to be the only fatal episode of the whole expedition. The Indians attempted to run off with the guns of the Americans and in the fight to recover them two of the Indians were killed, and the white men obliged to retreat with all haste to the Missouri, where they made a fortunate connection with the remainder of Lewis' party.

A monument to Captain Lewis, erected near the present town of Meriwether, a station on the Great Northern Railway, near Glacier Park, marks approximately the most westerly point on the Marias reached by Lewis and the most northerly attained by the expedition.

The Blackfeet and Gros Ventres were at that time closely allied and much of the subsequent hostility of the Blackfeet to Americans was attributed to the killing of the two Gros Ventres. Possibly this hostility was somewhat exaggerated but its effect was none the less far reaching. The "terrible Blackfeet" as they were called, became the bugbear of the West, the terror of traders and travelers, and the legend of their ferocity held back the exploration and settlement of this part of Montana until long after other portions of the West were well known.

THE BLACKFEET

The Blackfeet were a brave, handsome people, reigning in great prosperity over the buffalo ranges from which they had driven the Flatheads, Kootenais and many other tribes—forcing them to establish themselves west of the mountains.

It was the Piegan tribe of Blackfeet who occupied this part of Montana. Tradition differs as to what use they made of that beautiful mountain region now known as Glacier Park. Some writers say they feared the mountains. The lofty peaks, the gloom of the pine forests, the roar of waterfalls and shriek of winds in storm swept defiles were, they believed, the expression of a powerful, malignant force whom it was the part of wisdom to avoid by remaining on the plains—those plains which they loved—whose wide vistas could conceal no lurking enemy, supernatural or otherwise.

Others tell us the Piegans went on many excursions into that matchless hunting ground where elk pastured in the high, flower-starred valleys, and mountain sheep and goat, perched on dizzy ledges, offered a delicate target for their arrows or the trade guns of a later day.

The Piegans now occupy a reservation lying east of Glacier Park along which the Great Northern Railway passes.

They often make ceremonial visits to the hotels and chalets of the Park. Their costumes of elk and deer skin, rich with ermine, gay with bright patterns of dyed porcupine quills, their war bonnets and necklaces of grizzly bears claws, the pulsing



Bodmer's Drawing of a Blackfoot Brave and Blackfeet Types of Today

beat of their drums and wild music of their dance recalls the time of their freedom and barbaric splendor. Once more the softly tinted plains which hour after hour have flowed past the rushing train are dark with vanished hordes of buffalo, peopled with strange spirits of earth and air and sky. And, observing the serene haughtiness and dignity of Curly Bear or the patriarchal Mountain Chief, you may still see what it was to be a Blackfoot gentleman.

The traveler will find many parts of Glacier Park almost unchanged from those days when the evil spirits of the Blackfeet spoke in thunder from the mountain peaks.

Along the high passes whistling marmots answer each other with their lonely call; mountain goats skip perversely along suicidal precipices; soft, white ptarmigan, unafraid, scarcely bother to get from under the intruders' feet. Far below a jade green lake lies like a jewel in the valley. The air is clear and light, the silence perfect. It is the top of the world, the morning of life, and beneath you, the summits of the mountains, ridge after ridge, march away and lose themselves in the sky.

It is not easy to overestimate the importance of the Lewis and Clark exploration. It revealed to the world a new region of incalculable resource; prairies, plains and foothills which pastured such incredible numbers of elk, deer, bear, wild sheep and buffalo; rich valleys; streams swarming with the living treasure of the beaver; and beyond the mountains it discovered a country greener and more sumptuous than legendary Quivira, a land of magnificent forests, smiling meadows, deep harbors, and shining mountain peaks. Commerce eagerly followed them up the Missouri.

ASTOR AND ASTORIA

In New York the great merchant and fur trader, John Jacob Astor, conceived a truly imperial project. Fur trading posts were to be built along the Missouri and Columbia rivers with a central station at the mouth of the latter river; an overland route from St. Louis was to be established and vessels with supplies to be sent around the Horn to the post on the Columbia. There the ships were to take aboard the furs and proceed to China, the most profitable market. In Canton peltries were to be exchanged for the teas, porcelains and silks highly prized in England and America.



Fort Astoria in 1813 and Astoria of Today

This plan resulted in the first American settlement on the Pacific coast—the trading station of Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia. This was the community found by David Thompson in the summer of 1811 when he reached the end of his long journey down the great river.

Its establishment was attended with such spectacular adventure, suffering and heroism, as are not surpassed in the whole history of our frontiers.

The overland party, which set out from St. Louis in 1810 under Wilson Price Hunt, spent eleven months in crossing the plains and mountains to the Pacific. They made a southerly detour to avoid the dangerous country of the Blackfeet and endured every extremity of cold, hunger and fatigue before they straggled down the Columbia to the new fort at its mouth. This post had just been put up by the party which had come by sailing vessel around the Horn.

The very name of the ship, *Tonquin*, rings like a portent of disaster in the records of time. Astor's partners in the enterprise and some of the men were left at the mouth of the river to build Astoria; then the *Tonquin* sailed northward to trade for furs on the Island of Vancouver.

At Nootka Sound, disregarding the orders of Mr. Astor, Captain Thorn permitted the natives to come aboard in large numbers. Antagonized by his severity, the savages, at a given signal fell upon the white men and butchered all but five. Of

these, four left the ship during the night; the fifth, who was wounded, refused to accompany them.

The following day he lured the Indians onto the vessel, fired the arsenal and blew up the unfortunate *Tonquin* and all aboard her, including himself.

The four men, who had gone ashore, met a worse fate. They fell into the hands of the surviving members of the tribe and suffered every lingering agony those expert torturers could devise.

The War of 1812, the disloyalty to Astor of his Canadian partners at Astoria, the failure of our government to give him adequate aid, caused the ruin of this particular one of Astor's enterprises. The post was sold by the partners in charge to the Northwest Company in 1813 for a fraction of its value. From that time the fur trade of the Oregon country, in all but the most southwesterly parts, was in the hands of the British.

The Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies united in 1821. Dr. John McLoughlin, a man who played a long and honorable part in the early history of the Oregon country, was sent there in 1824 to take charge of the trade.

The headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company had been Fort George, formerly Astor's post on the site of the present city of Astoria. After McLoughlin's arrival it was supplanted by Fort Vancouver, built a hundred miles up the river where the city of Vancouver, Washington, now stands. From there the fur brigades set out for their distant trading posts, paddles swinging to the rhythm of the voyageur songs. When they returned with their precious cargo of beaver skins the spacious buildings, fields, gardens and green lawns of the fort offered a grateful welcome after the privations of their long exile.

A considerable settlement grew up about the post. Fort Vancouver became the commercial, agricultural and social center of the Oregon country and for many years was the foremost community, not only of the Pacific Northwest, but of the entire Pacific coast.

In the spring of 1825, before the buildings of the new fort were completed, a sailing vessel from England brought



The Tonquin

the first of many distinguished guests who were to be entertained at Fort Vancouver with such memorable hospitality. This was the celebrated Scotch botanist, David Douglas, collector for the Horticultural Society of London. He introduced over 200 species of American plants and trees into England and studied, collected and reported many hundreds of others. Wild flowers brought by Douglas from the banks of the Snake, the Spokane and the Columbia rivers, still bloom in the gardens of England and tall pines whisper there of the Pacific.

In memory of the great scientific service he rendered a monument was erected to him by the botanists of Europe; but Douglas has a more splendid memorial in the forests of the Northwest. He was the first to classify and give to the world the magnificent tree which has justly been named in his honor—the Douglas fir.

From Fort Vancouver Dr. McLoughlin ruled with benevolent wisdom and firmness over an immense domain. The succor and hospitality he offered the first missionaries and emigrants made possible and hastened the early settlement of this region by Americans.

Until 1843 there had been joint occupancy, under which English and American citizens had equal rights in the Oregon country. But as the population increased, it became necessary to establish a definite sovereignty.

Gray's discovery of the Columbia in 1792, the Lewis and Clark expedition to its mouth in 1805, Astor's establishment of a trading post there in 1811, were the foundations on which our claim to the region was firmly laid. And the great tide of American emigration, resulting in part from the efforts of such early missionaries as the Lees, Whitmans, Spaldings, Parker and others, aided and encouraged by McLoughlin's generous welcome to a country where he was all-powerful, was a deciding factor.

MISSOURI RIVER TRADE

East of the Rockies the American fur trade grew rapidly. Its headquarters were at St. Louis; its important highway the Missouri river, although it also sent traders up the Mississippi into Minnesota and Wisconsin.

As the Oriental and Glacier Park Limiteds pass through North Dakota and Montana, they touch at many points the devious course of the brown river. Its waters now seem curiously de-

serted and there is nothing left to recall the strange craft which for almost a century, beat their adventurous way against its swift current.

Dugout canoes; bull boats—round, shallow, unwieldy affairs made of raw hide stretched over a willow frame; flat boats for descending with the current; the imposing keel boat, 75 or 100 feet long, with a covered cabin or cargo box, a mast for sailing, a thousand feet of tow rope or cordelle to drag her up stream under the exertion of twenty or thirty men toiling along shore in single file, when the wind failed, or the water was too shallow or too swift for rowing. Last of all came the steamboat, riding high above the murky river and flat surrounding plains; the incredible fire canoe, which moved as if by magic, belching fire and smoke, emitting shrill screams, churning the shallow water with a revolving tail, before which the Indians covered their mouths and fell flat on their faces in terror.

Again we see the Canadian voyageur kneeling to his paddle, or laboring at the tow rope, singing his gay boat songs born two hundred years before along the water ways of the north. Here too were the famous mountain men, trappers, fur traders, unofficial explorers, most daring and romantic figures of the early scene; dressed like savages, scalps dangling from their belts, long hair braided and faces daubed with paint; first pathfinders of the West. They penetrated the remotest rivers, streams and mountains, trapping beaver, fighting and fraternizing with the Indians, and later guiding the official expeditions and covered wagon trains.

The Black Robes followed the water highway to the West. They paused at fur posts to exhort and baptize and passed westward to their work among distant tribes. Men of science, too, from all over the world, dared the perils and hardships of the Missouri to study the unknown flora and fauna of the West; soldiers came, explorers, and later men bound for the gold mines of Montana and Idaho; pioneers and at last ranchmen and settlers, bringing women and children, to make a world where men would want to stay.

FORT UNION AND FORT BENTON

Where the Great Northern Railway crosses the line from North Dakota to Montana, stood the famous establishment toward which all early commerce and travel of the upper Missouri converged. This was Fort Union. It was built in 1828 by the

American Fur Company, then owned by John Jacob Astor and for forty years was the most important white man's community beyond the frontier.

It stood in almost unimaginable isolation and the daily life lived within its high stockade—at once colorful, dangerous and monotonous—is the essence of a period now gone forever.

Down from the north over the pastel colored coteaux, up the Yellowstone or eastward from Milk river and beyond came Indians with furs to trade. They brought wives, children, dogs, ponies, travois, and, dressed in their gaudy, savage best, approached the fort with beating drums and flying pennants; the bright flag was run up and the fort saluted with its brass cannon. Then the factor surrounded by his retinue, marched out in state to greet them and to invite the chiefs to his apartment where the ceremonial pipe would be smoked, presents exchanged and the rum eagerly expected by the Indians, be offered to them. Fur trading in its earliest and palmiest days was a ritual, and its conventions carefully observed.

Westward to Fort Union from the Red River of the North, came the caravans of half breed buffalo hunters. Their settlements and way of life form a unique chapter in our history. Twice each summer entire communities left Pembina, a town on the Great Northern Railway in eastern North Dakota, or Fort Garry (Winnipeg) for the western plains following the buffalo—men on horseback, women on foot driving the oxen, children on top of household goods piled high on the two-wheeled wooden carts. Slowly on screeching ungreased axles the long trains, often a thousand carts, plodded across Dakota to and into



Fort Union and Fort Benton

Montana, the scouts ever on the lookout for grazing herds. Frequently these gypsies of the north stopped to rest and trade at Fort Union. When they returned eastward part of their cargo of robes, dried meat, pemmican and tallow, was shipped up the Red River by steamboat to the head of navigation; thence by ox cart to St. Paul and from there to the eastern seaboard.

Fort Benton, established in 1846, below the Great Falls of the Missouri, rivalled Fort Union in importance. It succeeded Forts Piegan and McKenzie, which had been built at the mouth of the Marias river a year or so after the erection of Fort Union; and it survived the latter post many years. After gold was discovered in Montana, and cattle replaced the buffalo, Fort Benton became the great river port of the West. It was also the head of overland travel in that region. The important military and emigrant route known as the Mullan road crossed the Rocky and Bitter Root Mountains from Fort Benton by way of Great Falls and Helena to Walla Walla. A statue to the American army officer who built the road—Lieutenant Mullan—is to be seen at Fort Benton.

But the picturesque river city lost its importance over night when the Great Northern Railway reached there in 1887.

ISAAC I. STEVENS AND EARLY RAILROAD SURVEYS

In 1853 an expedition of peculiar significance appeared at Fort Union. This was the party under Governor Isaac I. Stevens, commissioned by the government to survey a northern railroad route to the Pacific. The expedition of which the above



Indian Congress Held at Fort Union, July, 1925



*Statue to Lieut. Mullan, at
Fort Benton*

mentioned Lieutenant Mullan was a member set out from St. Paul, a small settlement at the head of navigation on the Mississippi, and followed approximately the present line of the Great Northern through Minnesota, Dakota and Montana to Fort Benton, Great Falls and Helena. This route was recommended by Governor Stevens, but his recommendation was not at the time acted upon, probably because the survey passed

through the Blackfoot country, and also because it made a detour southward to cross the Rockies, instead of extending directly westward as the Great Northern now does.

While at Fort Benton, Governor Stevens sent a party to the head waters of Marias river to search for a rumored pass used by the Blackfeet in former times.

The reconnaissance failed to disclose it, but Governor Stevens was convinced that such a pass existed, and, as it was reported to give a remarkably low and easy crossing in a direct line with his surveys to east and west, he felt its discovery to be of the utmost importance. Accordingly, after he had reached the west side of the mountains, he sent a second party back to look once more for the so-called Marias pass, and once more it eluded discovery, for although a pass was found and called Marias it was not the one he sought.

While Governor of Washington Territory, Stevens made important treaties with the Indians. One of the most spectacular of these councils took place in Montana near the present city of Great Falls. On a wide plain beside the Missouri eight tribes from east and west of the Rockies, many of whom had never met before, except to kill, torture or rob each other, made camp together. Over feasts of steaming buffalo ribs, with tribal dances and songs and never-ending speeches, friendly agreements were reached and kept by deadliest enemies; and there a treaty between the Blackfeet and the United States government was drawn up. Had its terms and those of many other early pacts been faithfully observed by the American government, much ensuing disaster would have been avoided.

CLOSE OF AN EPOCH

Fort Union was abandoned in 1866 and its timbers used to build the military post of Fort Buford, a change highly significant at the time. The remains of some of the buildings of Fort Buford may still be seen just south of the Great Northern main line a mile below the mouth of the Yellowstone. Deprived of their lands and of their means of livelihood, the buffalo, which were rapidly being annihilated by the insatiable demands of the fur trade, the Sioux and other western Indians were in open revolt.

Soldiers now marched along the upper Missouri; Sitting Bull's warriors terrorized the plains; the flying army of Chief Joseph met defeat near the foot of the blue Bear Paws, about fifteen miles south of the town of Chinook on the Great Northern Railway.

There could, of course, be but one outcome. The Indians were subdued and retired to reservations some of which now skirt the Great Northern right of way for many miles in Dakota and Montana.

The fur trade, having taken its heavy toll, withdrew. Plains and prairies stretching between half settled Minnesota and the small mining communities along the foot of the Rockies in Montana, remained, except for a few military and trading posts and Indian agencies, an untenanted waste, virtually as Verendrye had found them a century and a half before.

The amazing fertility of the Red River valley was ignored. Beyond the Rockies were a few isolated trading posts; farther west flourishing farming communities and towns on the Willamette



A Red River Ox Cart Train



*Chief Joseph Surrendering to
General Miles*

Minnesota crept haltingly westward and northward from St. Paul to St. Anthony (Minneapolis). It reached out to the valley of the Red River of the North, which had long been a part of the much traveled highway between the Canadian settlements on the lower Red river and the head of navigation of the Mississippi.

This railroad was the St. Paul and Pacific, parent of the Great Northern. It failed in 1873 and later was bought and reorganized by James J. Hill and three associates. He soon made a connection with the Canadian Pacific built south to the border from Winnipeg, and thus it was as an important international carrier that the Great Northern began its remarkably successful career.

Gradually it spread through the rich agricultural regions of Minnesota and Dakota where a quarter section of free land waited for every settler. Emigrants came in hundreds and thousands; the very construction trains were loaded with them; they were hauled in carloads over rails not yet fully spiked to the ties. In 1879 the reconstructed St. Paul and Pacific became the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba; in less than fifteen years as the Great Northern—which it was then called—it had reached the Western Sea. It followed the old historic highway taken by trader,

and Columbia rivers; in Washington a handful of tiny settlements set down in the magnificent forests of Puget Sound. Their only method of communication with the Atlantic seaboard was the long waterway around the Horn, or the difficult journey overland to the Mississippi.

JAMES J. HILL AND RAIL- ROAD REALITY

In 1862 the first railroad in



The William Crooks



Building the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba into Minot, N. D.

voyageur, soldier and priest, and crossed the Rocky Mountains by the elusive pass, the existence of which was suspected by Meriwether Lewis, which Isaac Stevens' surveyors failed to find and which was at last discovered by a man celebrated in the annals of American engineering, John F. Stevens.

Mr. Stevens was at that time assistant engineer of the Great Northern Railway. It was midwinter. The half breed guide who was his only companion gave out and Stevens, leaving him in an improvised camp, went on alone. He reached the summit with the thermometer falling to forty below, and, continuing through the low wide valley, reached westward-flowing water. He then knew he had found Marias pass.

Where Stevens camped that night and tramped back and forth through a runway in the snow till dawn that he might not freeze to death, there now stands, against a solid wall of rose and purple tinted mountains, the statue of a young engineer.

It is the likeness of John F. Stevens and commemorates not only his discovery of the pass, his many distinguished achievements as a world famous engineer, but those others of his profession who were the last pathfinders along the centuries' old trail.

He looks toward the West, toward the imaginary realms of Quivira and Anian, toward the Pacific and toward India.

The railroad goes on down the Pacific watershed, through a treasure land of forest and mines, through fruit lands, wheat lands giving the highest yield per acre in America, through the inland metropolis of Spokane, the beautiful gorges of the Cas-

cedes to the sea ports of Seattle, Tacoma and Portland in whose harbors are the ships of every nation.

The settlement and development of this immense region have been brought about almost entirely by the transcontinental railroads, and in that achievement the Great Northern Railway and its builder, James J. Hill, have played a notable part.



John F. Stevens Statue at Summit, Montana





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Flandrau, Grace C (Hod)
Historic northwest
adventure land

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